

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph beginning at page 12, line 10, with the following amended paragraph.

From the perspective of GigaPoint bus 100, there are 151 packet positions for the TDM packets in a 125 microsecond frame. These positions are used as a reference at the RC 105 for cross-connecting and merging TDM packets. A representative method of merging TDM packets is fully disclosed in co-pending U.S. ~~patent application Ser. No. \_\_\_\_\_~~ (Attorney Docket No. M-8645-US), US Patent Application 09/874,904 entitled TRAFFIC MERGING SYSTEM, which is herein incorporated by reference for all purposes. From a hardware perspective, there are no limitations as to which GigaPoint channels are allocated to TDM. However, as Channel 0 (i.e., the overhead channel) uses 5-bytes for overhead, if TDM is allocated in Channel 0, then only 805 of the 810 bytes is available for sync TDM packets.